

Message Text

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NODIS

CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR MPOL EG US

SUBJ: TALK WITH CINCUSNAVEUR ADMIRAL BAGLEY

1. WHILE IN LONDON EN ROUTE TO CAIRO, I HAD A LONG TALK WITH CINCUSNAVEUR ADMIRAL BAGLEY ABOUT U.S. NAVY'S INTEREST IN EGYPT. BAGLEY HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY HELPFUL IN ARRANGING US NAVY COOPERATION IN SUCH MATTERS AS TRANSPORT OF TUTANKHAMON EXHIBIT, PORT SAID MINE CLEARANCE ETC. HE MADE SEVERAL POINTS WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST TO YOU:

2. APART FROM NAVAL VISITS TO EGYPTIAN PORTS, WHICH BAGLEY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE INCREASED, HE SPOKE OF SIXTH FLEET BEING ABLE TO PROVIDE TRAINING FOR EGYPTIAN NAVAL PERSONNEL IN ASW, NAVIGATION, GUNNERY, ETC. HE BELIEVES THAT SUCH TRAINING WILL HAVE FAVORABLE IMPACT ON EGYPTIAN MILITARY. I TOLD BAGLEY THAT, FOR THE TIME BEING AT LEAST, THE GOE WANTS THE NUMBER OF SHIP VISITS LIMITED TO ABOUT FOUR A YEAR, BUT NOTED I HAD GOTTEN AGREEMENT OF PRIMIN, GAMASY AND FAHMY THAT NEXT VISIT MIGHT BE NUCLEAR POWERED VESSEL. THIS WILL BE THE USS CALIFORNIA, WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO VISIT ALEXANDRIA OCTOBER 14 18. SO FAR AS SIXTH FLEET TRAINING IS CONCERNED, I REMINDED ADMIRAL

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OF CONGRESSIONAL SENSITIVITY ON ALL MATTERS AFFECTING

MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT. SHOULD THIS IDEA BE ACTIVELY CONSIDERED AT ANY TIME IN THE FUTURE, I WANTED TO BE SURE THAT IT WAS CHECKED OUT WITH WASHINGTON IN ADVANCE. APART FROM THIS, I HAD TO TELL HIM THAT THE EGYPTIAN NAVY RANKS VERY LOW ON THE LOCAL TOTEM POLE AND THAT THERE ARE DEFINITE LIMITS TO IMPACT WE MAY EXPECT OUT OF ASSISTANCE TO THE EGYPTIAN NAVY.

3. AS WITH ADMIRAL HOLLWAY, BAGLEY IS ANXIOUS TO USE THE ALEXANDRIA SHIPYARD FOR REPAIR SIXTH FLEET VESSELS. I TOLD HIM THAT I WAS UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO SOUND OUT FAHMY, GAMASY AND THE PRESIDENT ON THIS MATTER AND WOULD TAKE A FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO FOLLOWING MY RETURN TO CAIRO. I EMPHASIZED THAT WE DO NOT WANT TO APPEAR TO BE PRESSURING THE EGYPTIANS ON THIS MATTER. IF GOE IS INTERESTED, HOWEVER, WE WOULD LOOK FURTHER INTO WHAT USE WE MIGHT MAKE OF THE ALEXANDRIA SHIPYARD. BAGLEY, INCIDENTALLY, HAS A THOUGHT WHICH I THINK IS BETTER THAN THE HOLLOWAY IDEA OF SENDING A LARGE SURVEY TEAM. BAGLEY BELIEVES THE NAVY COULD OBTAIN THE INFORMATION IT NEEDS ON THE SHIPYARD BY A VISIT OF A NAVAL SHIP WITH A FEW PEOPLE ABOARD, WHO WOULD BE EXPERTS ON VARIOUS TECHNICAL MATTERS. DEPENDING UPON THE EGYPTIAN REACTION, I WILL LOOK FURTHER INTO THIS CONCEPT, WHICH HAS MERIT OF BEING LOWER PROFILE. AS YOU KNOW, I INTEND TO APPROACH FAHMY AND GAMASY IN TERMS OF WHETHER THE ALEXANDRIA SHIPYARD MASTER'S LETTER OF WELL OVER A YEAR AND A HALF AGO INVITING THE NAVY TO USE THE SHIPYARD WAS SENT WITH POLITICAL CLEARANCE.

4. BAGLEY'S STAFF HAS BEEN MONITORING CLOSELY EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN BORDER TENSIONS. IT HAS SEEN INTELLIGENCE REPORTS OUT OF WASHINGTON, INCLUDING STATE, SUGGESTING THAT THE EGYPTIANS MIGHT LAUNCH AN ATTACK BEFORE VERY LONG. UNLIKE THE WASHINGTON ASSESSMENTS, BAGLEY'S ESTIMATE IS THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO SEND VOLUNTEERS OR ASSIST QADHAFI IN SOME OTHER WAY. HE EXPRESSED HIS PERSONAL CONCERN THAT SIXTH FLEET MIGHT SUDDENLY BE TASKED WITH KEEPING SOVIETS OUT. IF SO, HE SPOKE OF NEEDING ADVANCE WARNING SINCE EXISTING SIXTH FLEET OPERATIONAL PLANS

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WOULD HAVE TO BE CHANGED. I TOLD HIM WE HAVE HAD NO SUCH REQUEST, BUT ONE COULD OF COURSE NEVER EXCLUDE SUCH A POSSIBILITY. IN CONNECTION WITH OUR PERTINENT TALK ON EGYPTIAN INTENTIONS TOWARD LIBYA, SUBJECT TO YOUR CONCURRENCE, I RATHER THINK IT IS DESIREABLE TO ASK SADAT TO GIVE US SOME ADVANCE WARNING WHEN AND IF HE DECIDES TO GO AHEAD. WITHOUT THIS, SIXTH FLEET MAY NOT BE POSITIONED TO HONOR COMMITMENT WE MADE TO SADAT.

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